tranquility would continue to be maintained along the India-China border, thus creating a suitable atmosphere in which the two countries can address the issue of a settlement of the boundary issue.

Pak PM's Letter to various Heads of States

2752. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the Hindustan times of November 12, 1993, that Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has addressed letters to heads of various countries to pursuade India to end its repression in the occupied territory and engage in a substantive dialogue with Pakistan;

(b) if so, what to Government's information, was the precise message conveyed by Pak-Prime Minister to the different heads of States; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Government have seen media reports to this effect.

(c) Government remains committed to the Simla Agreement under which all differences between India and Pakistan are to be resolved peacefully and through bilateral negotiations. There can be no role for any third party.

Government will continue to apprise the international community of the facts regarding developments in Jammu & Kashmir in the correct perspective.

Diplomatic Relations with South Africa

2753. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether normal diplomatic and trade relations have been established with South Africa following the withdrawal of the economic blocade against South Africa by the U.N.; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Yes, sir.

(b) During South African Foreign Minister Mr. R.F. Botha's visit to India from November 21 to 22, 1993. India and South Africa signed protocols on the establishment of diplomatic and consular relations.

Trade relations between the two countries were earlier restored on September 25, 1993.

Steps taken to pressurise Burmese Military regime

2754. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have so far been taken by Govt, to bring pressure to bear on the Burmese Military regime to release the democratically elected leader and for restoration of democratic regime in that country, through UN and otherwise; and

(b) if so, the success, if any, achieved in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) We have repeatedly called on the Government of Myanmar, both on our own and in consonance with other like-minded countries, to release the democratically elected leaders and to restore democracy in the country. We

have also supported various resolutions in the UN and other international fora in this regard.

We have noted that during the recent months the Government of Myanmar have released a number of elected representatives and party' workers. A National Convention has also been called for drafting a new Constitution.

We continue to support the restoration of a democratic government in Myanmar—within the parameters of our policy to refrain from interference in the internal affairs of another country.

News item in Madurai Edition of Indian Express

2755. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news item "Cruel interludes of an Indian House maid" appeared in Indian Express Madurai Edition dated 11th September, 1993;

(b) if so, what action Government have taken thereon; and

(c) how many such cases were brought to the notice of Government and in how many cases Government have taken action?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Government have seen the news item which appeared in the Indian Express dated 11th September, 1993 and obtained a detailed reporte on the matter.

On receipt of a representation in March, 1993 regarding the well being of Kumari Anjammal who had been in Kuwait since 1992, Government had asked the Embassy of India in Kuwait to make necessary enquiries and to provide whatever assistance was required. The Mission contacted the sponsor and succeeded in arranging for him to bring Kumari Anjammal to the Mission to check on her wellbeing. She was interviewed at the Embassy of India, Kuwait on June 2, 1993 by a Tamil speaking official. Her sponsor was not present. She said She had no complaint whatsoever. She was also taken to meet a senior officer. Facilities for interpretation from Tamil into Hindi were provided. At this interview also she did not make any complaint of any physical torture. No burn scars were visible on her. At the Embassy's suggestion she handed in a personal letter to be despatched through the Embassay. She was repatriated directly by her sponsor to India in July, 1993. The allegation of indifference and insensitivity on the part of the Indian Embassy is baseless.

Following the appearance of the news item, an Embassy representative met her sponsor Mohammed Al Mendi with whom she had reportedly worked for about one and half years. Her sponsor complained that she had run away from his house on three occasions and reemployed her each time. He maintained he was not liable to pay her salary for the period of her absence. He furnished receipts of remittances to India for KD 105.750 (approximately Rs. 11,000) and for purchase of gold by her worth KD 52 (approximately Rs. 5,500/-). He also informed the Embassy that the envelope sent by her through the Embassy contained a draft for KD 80 (approximately Rs. 8,50(K) and that an equal sum was given to her at the time of her departure to India. As regards fare for her return journey, she had not worked with him for a full period of 2 years and therefore her sponsor adjusted her salary dues against the air ticket costing Rs. 14,000'- approximately. This information is being sent to Kumari Anjammal.

(c) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.